

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
December 2, 2015
AMENDED AND APPROVED

Committee Members Present: K. LaForge, D. Pullen, S. Burt, D. Decker, C. Jessup, T. O'Grady, C. Crandall

Others Present: M. Alger, L. Ballengee, H. Budinger, D. Fanton, M. Gasdik, V. Grant, K. Graves, D. Healy, R. Hollis, T. Miner, K. Monroe, B. Penman, B. Riehle, D. Root, T. Ross, R. Scott, B. Starks, N. Ungermann, R. Whitney

Media Present: B. Quinn, *Wellsville Daily Reporter*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m. by Human Services Committee Chairman Kevin LaForge.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried to approve the Human Services Committee minutes of November 4, 2015.

Health Department

Monthly Report

Public Health Director Lori Ballengee reminded everyone the Board of Health Dinner is at the Angelica Hotel on December 16, 2015. If you would like to attend, please let Janet Norris or Ms. Ballengee know.

Budget Transfer

Director Lori Ballengee requested a resolution for a budget transfer of WIC Fringe Benefits to Fees. Ms. Ballengee stated when the Cornell Staff was brought on as County employees the fringe benefits were estimated using the County averages, and funding was moved from .456 to the fringe accounts. Not all employees took the County health insurance, and differences exist between actual employee monthly costs and the County average. As a result, the hospitalization account has budgeted appropriations exceeding projected actual expenses, and the Health Department is requesting these monies be transferred to the Health Contracts account. Legislator Burt requested clarification on the money being transferred. County Treasurer Terri Ross said it was grant funded money. She noted it is not new money; it is reallocating the grant money because some employees did not take the health insurance. Legislator Burt wondered if this could be a savings to the County; Ms. Ross responded no we are not receiving any additional money. This action is just reallocating previously appropriated funds.

From:		To:		
A4190.806 Hosp/Med Ins	\$13,788	A4190.456 Health Contracts		\$12,216
		A4190.802 Retirement		\$ 1,359
		A4190.803 FICA		\$ 72
		A4190.804 Workers Comp		\$ 35
		A4190.805 Disability		\$ 6
				<u>\$13,788</u>

The request was approved on a motion by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Budget Transfer

Director Lori Ballengee requested a resolution for a budget transfer of Family Planning Fringe Benefits to Fees. Ms. Ballengee stated when the Cornell staff was brought on as County employees the fringe benefits were estimated using the County averages and budgeted funding was moved from .456 to the fringe accounts. Not all employees took the County health insurance, and differences exist between actual employee monthly costs and the County average. As a result the hospitalization account has budgeted appropriations exceeding projected actual expenses, and the Health Department is requesting these monies be transferred to the fees account.

From:		To:		
A4035.806 Hosp/Med Ins	\$6,281	A4035.409 Fees		\$5,586
		A4035.802 Retirement		\$ 461
		A4035.803 FICA		\$ 190
		A4035.804 Workers Comp		\$ 38
		A4035.805 Disability		<u>\$ 6</u>
				\$6,281

The request was approved on a motion by Legislator Decker, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Department of Social Services

Monthly Report

Legislator O'Grady asked about the investigations on the Integrity Unit Report. He noted there were 10 investigations that were completed. However, there were a total of 9 that were substantiated or unsubstantiated. Commissioner Vicki Grant replied there may have been one held over from last month. Legislator Pullen asked about the year-to-date savings on the Integrity Unit Report, and how it compares to other years. Ms. Grant stated she couldn't remember the previous year, but they can look at the annual report.

Ms. Grant announced the Foster Care Christmas Party is Monday, December 7, 2015. It is from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Cuba VFW. Legislator LaForge said he attended the party last year, and was very impressed with the effort that went into the party. Legislator Pullen noted it is extra work for the Caseworkers, and they go above and beyond. Ms. Grant said they receive donations from the community and staff, and Allegany County is the only County that does this for their foster kids. She reported last year they had about 130 people attend including children ages birth to eighteen years old, the biological parents, and the foster parents. Ms. Grant also said there was an adoption this month, and that is a total of twelve for the year.

Budget Transfer

Commissioner Vicki Grants requested a resolution to make the following end-of-year transfers:

From:		To:		
A6010.482 Other Contracts	\$ 5,000	A6010.413 Lease		\$ 5,000
A6119.474 Child Welfare	\$25,000	A6010.481 ACCORD		\$25,000
A6119.474 Child Welfare	\$50,000	A6070.474 POS		\$50,000

A6119.474 Child Welfare \$50,000 A6109.474 TANF \$50,000

Legislator Decker asked about the budget on the lease. Ms. Grant said it was budgeted, but some of the copiers that were replaced this year have higher lease costs. Legislator Burt asked if they over budgeted for child welfare. Ms. Grant says it is always an estimate when they are budgeting; they look at the trends, and try to be conservative when budgeting. The actual costs depend on the kids and their needs. The request was approved on a motion by Legislator O'Grady, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Permission to Fill Case Manager

Commissioner Vicki Grant requested permission to fill a contingent Case Manager (AFSCME, Grade 15, Step 1) position. This vacancy is the result of a retirement. This position is in the Temporary Assistance Unit, and is responsible for determining eligibility for day care assistance, authorizing benefits to day care providers, assisting those with emergency needs, and those claiming homelessness. Legislator O'Grady asked about the policy that any requests to fill a position go to the County Administrator to determine if the position is needed. Legislator Burt then asked if the County Administrator has ever turned down a request to fill a position. County Administrator Mitch Alger said he has had discussions with Ms. Grant about positions. He noted Ms. Grant makes an effort to look at positions, and see if they need to be filled. Ms. Grant noted they recently abolished two positions. Mr. Alger stated in the past, he has said he doesn't think a position is needed. Legislator Burt asked how many homeless are in the County. Ms. Grant said it is difficult to answer because there are different definitions of homelessness. She said she can get the number of homeless for him. The request was approved on a motion by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Permission to Fill Senior Social Welfare Examiner

Commissioner Vicki Grant requested permission to fill a Senior Social Welfare Examiner (AFSCME, Grade 13, Step 1) position. This vacancy is the result of a promotion. This position is responsible for overseeing several Social Welfare Examiners in the daily process of determining eligibility for benefits, and authorizing those benefits. The request was approved on a motion by Legislator O'Grady, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Permission to Fill Caseworker

Commissioner Vicki Grant requested permission to fill a contingent Caseworker (AFSCME, Grade 16, Step Min.) position. This vacancy is a result of a promotion. This position is in the Services Unit, and is responsible for ensuring the health, welfare, and safety of children and families. Legislator Burt asked why it is contingent and not permanent. Ms. Grant replied there isn't a Senior Caseworker list, so the person who was promoted to this position still has to pass the Senior Caseworker test. The request was approved on a motion by Legislator Decker, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

Office for the Aging

Monthly Report

Director Madeleine Gasdik was willing to answer questions about her monthly report. Mr. O'Grady asked about case management. Ms. Gasdik said a staff specialist helps the client with whatever they need. She noted they mostly help with scheduling home care aides. Ms.

Gasdik reported when this month's committee report was submitted, they had 23 people on the insurance counseling wait list. She said the staff worked very hard to make sure everyone gets served. When she left on Friday, there was no one on the list. Today, there are 22 on the waiting list; people are waiting until the last minute. Ms. Gasdik said when she did the needs assessment survey, 45 percent of the respondents said understanding and getting help with Medicare was their number one concern.

Ms. Gasdik showed the committee new pocket talkers. Some of the clients they serve have difficulty hearing. The National Association for the Deaf recommended them at a conference she attended. They cost \$200 a set, and she is excited to have them. She said they will be helpful for clients and staff. Ms. Gasdik also showed the committee what goes in the blizzard boxes for the Meals-On-Wheels Program. This year everyone on the route is receiving a blizzard box with 3 shelf stable meals a day. They ask for a suggested donation of \$10, and it costs about \$16 per box. Ms. Gasdik reported the Wellsville Middle School Jump Club is helping to put them together. Ms. Gasdik distributed information on the Wallace C. Higgins Wall of Honor. For \$100 someone can purchase a granite tile to honor a loved one that will be placed on the wall. Ms. Gasdik thanked Chairman Crandall for helping with this. Legislator Healy asked if the landlord was ok with this; Ms. Gasdik said yes. Ms. Gasdik also thanked Mr. LaForge for the work on the driveway at the office. She noted it has made a huge difference.

Ms. Gasdik announced that tomorrow is the Advisory Council Christmas Party at 11:30 a.m. Everyone is welcome to attend. Ms. Gasdik reported she was nominated and elected to the Association on Aging in New York, which is a state-wide advocacy group. Ms. Gasdik said she just learned about a New York State change. Medical Answering Services (MAS) clients are now instructed that they must take a public bus unless they have a doctor's note. Ms. Gasdik reported they have some clients on Medicaid that live a mile or a mile and a half from a bus stop. She is concerned some County clients may suffer from this change. Ms. Gasdik also reported that Southern Tier Health Services closed on Monday, November 29, 2015. They were one of the contractors for the Home Care Aides Program. Ms. Gasdik was given about a week notice of the closing. Jan and Bev's is trying to absorb as many cases as they can, and hire some of the old aides so there is no disruption in services.

Ms. Gasdik shared comments from a client survey stating how helpful the Office for the Aging was. Ms. Gasdik said often clients don't know about all the services they offer. As a result, she put all the services they offered in the last *Silver Linings* newsletter. Ms. Gasdik also mentioned two Advisory Council members are leaving. Keith Folts has been on the council for twenty-seven years, and Bev Armstrong has been on the council for fourteen years. She noted they are looking for people in those districts to fill these positions.

Appointments to the Office of the Aging Citizens Advisory Board

The Chairman of the Board plans to reappoint the following individuals as members of the Citizens Advisory Council to the Office for the Aging for a three-year term commencing January 1, 2016, and expiring December 31, 2018.

Over 60 Members

Mona Pettit, Cuba

Members

Reita Sobeck-Lynch, Wellsville

A motion was made by Legislator Pullen, seconded by Legislator Burt, and carried to sponsor a resolution, confirming the Chairman's appointments. **Prepare Resolution**

Appointments to the Community Services Board

The four-year terms of Kathy Bentley from Andover, and Calvin L. Schierer from Houghton expire on December 31, 2015. The Community Services Board recommends that these individuals be reappointed to a new four-year term through December 31, 2019. Approval was granted on a motion by Legislator Decker, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Resolution Regarding Safety Net from Yates County

Legislator LaForge talked about the resolution from Yates County regarding the Safety Net Program. Currently, it is 71 percent County and 29 percent State share, and they want to go back to a 50/50 sharing formula. Legislator Pullen commented he strongly supports this. Chairman Crandall believes it should be forwarded to Inter-County. A motion to adopt and support the resolution as written was made by Legislator Jessup, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Good of the Order

Legislator LaForge welcomed Allegany Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Inc. (ACASA) Executive Director Bill Penman. Legislator LaForge noted Mr. Penman came to the meeting to discuss the issue of Heroin in the County. Mr. Penman stated the issue of Heroin has grown everywhere, and the impact on Allegany County has increased. Mr. Penman said they do a Risk and Protective Survey every two years in the Allegany County School Districts. In the most recent Survey, students reported some use in high school, but not a lot. He said the impact of Heroin on local citizens has increased. In 2013, approximately 8 percent of admitted clients into our out-patient clinic had a primary use of Heroin. Today, it is about 20 percent. This doesn't include the use of Opiates, which is about 20 percent. So, all the people admitted into the clinic who use Heroin or Opiates is about 40 percent. He noted alcohol is still the primary substance at 45 percent.

Mr. Penman said part of the growth of Heroin directly correlates with opiate use. It has made it more difficult for people to obtain opiates. He said there is legislation where a physician can look up prescriptions from other doctors to see if the patient already has one from another doctor. He also noted the price of Heroin is cheaper than Oxycodone. So, it makes it more accessible. Mr. Penman said they are working with the State and local clinics to do prevention in 11 schools in the County. Legislator Healy commented prevention is always the best policy, so he wondered if there was adequate funding for education in schools. Mr. Penman said they have not seen an increase in prevention funding in 13 years, and they try to do as much as they can.

Mr. Penman said they are seeing the younger population overdosing, needing detox services, or inpatient care. Depending on insurance, it can be one week to a month to get someone into treatment. If a person doesn't have insurance, they try to use the State program. Mr. Penman discussed the use of Narcan when someone overdoses. The State is trying to get a 72-hour hold if someone comes into the emergency room with an overdose. Currently, as soon as the person feels fine, they can walk out the door. This hold is trying to interrupt the cycle, and get them into treatment prior to them leaving the hospital.

Legislator O'Grady believes part of the problem is that nationwide there is confusion on what they want to do with drug addiction. He believes there is a gray area where addiction is seen as a condition and it is treated as such, but then there is the criminal side of it. He believes they need to treat it as a disease and decriminalize it, or have consequences for their actions. He noted there are not really any deterrents anymore of getting into it in the first place.

Legislator LaForge asked if Methamphetamine has peaked. Mr. Penman believes it has because the price of Heroin has come down, and cooking Methamphetamine is not as profitable, and it is time consuming. He reported the numbers of people using Methamphetamine as a primary use drug is fairly low. Chairman Crandall asked about the issue of bath salt synthetic. Mr. Penman said it still comes up every once in a while. He noted they are not seeing a lot of it, but in the cities they are seeing more of it.

Legislator LaForge asked about the impurity of the Heroin supply. Mr. Penman discussed what Heroin is being cut with. He noted the Erie County lab was looking to add additional staff in their lab because they are trying to identify what some of the different synthetic drugs and Heroin are being cut with. Legislator Healy asked if they know where the Heroin is coming from. Mr. Penman said Afghanistan and Mexico. Legislator Decker asked about a pipeline from Toronto to Rochester and down the Interstate 390 corridor. Mr. Penman said yes there is one from Canada, and these drugs are coming from Europe. Legislator Decker said there is an increase in other crimes associated with it, such as gun sales. Legislator O'Grady commented there are crimes that go with addiction, and they are seeing an increase in shoplifting and burglaries.

Legislator LaForge asked what we can do as a County to address the issue. Mr. Penman suggested talking with the State Representatives about legislation to put a hold on someone who is overdosed, so they can get them into treatment. Mr. Penman noted the State is looking at the bed availability issues. Chairman Crandall said if Mr. Penman or anyone knows of proposed Legislation coming up that the Legislators can take position on to give local support. Legislator LaForge discussed drafting some type of resolution for purposes of information to approve, and send to Inter-County. Legislator LaForge said maybe having it to discuss at the next meeting in January. Legislator LaForge thanked Mr. Penman for coming.

Legislator Burt commented that Secretary to the Clerk of the Board Becky Scott is doing a good job, and the changeover has been seamless.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 4:13 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Decker, seconded by Legislator Pullen, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Scott, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators